

REBECCA COHN eNEWSLETTER

for the twenty-fourth Assembly District

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Cohn's Comment



For the first time in California history, public high school seniors will have to pass a single, uniform test to graduate. While the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) has been given for five years, this year it will count for the first time.

The CAHSEE has two parts: English language arts and mathematics. In addition to their regular coursework, students must pass both parts of the exam to receive a diploma. Students take the test for the first time beginning in 10th grade. If they fail one or both of the sections, they will have up to five more chances to pass.

The class of 2006 is the first to feel the pressure of having to pass this exam to graduate. 88% have already passed both parts of the test. This year's seniors will have three more chances to pass.

These results show that California students are making steady and, in some cases, impressive progress on the exam. They show improvement in both the English language arts and the mathematics sections.

The exit exam shows potential employers, universities and the students themselves that graduates have a solid grasp of the basics. This gives everyone involved confidence in the value of a California high school diploma.

(Continued on page 2)

Teaching Teens Relationship Safety

SAN JOSE — In 2004, there were six domestic violence-related deaths in Santa Clara County. In 2003, the County lost twenty-one people to acts of domestic violence. Of those, two met and began dating as teens. In fact, one in every three teen relationships involves physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse.

Assemblymember Cohn has partnered with a University of California 4-H group to create "Stop the Silence of the Violence". The program is a teen dating

violence awareness assembly presented in local high schools.

"Now more than ever, we need to ensure that our teenagers are aware of what constitutes a healthy relationship, and that they have access to the necessary resources to seek help if they or someone they know is being abused." — Rebecca Cohn

The goal of the project is to illustrate the warning signs of

(Continued on page 2)

Storywalk Delights Children, Parents Alike

SAN JOSE – In the cool of the shady trees outside the Kirk Community Center in San Jose, Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn hosted her first Storywalk. The Cambrian neighborhood event attracted children and parents to celebrate books and literacy.

Activities included face painting and arts and crafts tables. Children created art projects to take home, related to the day's featured stories. Also on hand was the Santa Clara County Library system's Bookmobile. Children received library cards and



Cohn at Storywalk with SBC volunteers

(Continued on page 3)

Mark Your Calendars: "Stranger Danger" Camp Returns

"Stranger Danger" Camp and Children's Safety Resource Faire

Saturday, September 24th from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Sartorette Elementary School

3850 Woodford Dr.

San Jose, CA 95124

Please contact Julie Lind at (408) 282-8920 or Julie.Lind@asm.ca.gov for more information. ♦

(Continued from page 1)

Overall, students are doing well on the CAHSEE. However, there is still an achievement gap between different groups. Latino, African American, English language learners and special education students all lag behind the statewide average. For example, passage rates for African American and Latino students on the exit exam are fairly low (e.g. African Americans: 37% failed English; 46% failed Math. Latinos: 38% failed English; 39% failed Math). While progress has been made in narrowing the gap, education professionals need to focus more on these students.

Many have expressed concern that using this test alone is too narrow. They feel that other valid measures of student proficiency should be considered.

AB 1531 by Assemblymember Karen Bass would allow school districts the option to create and use alternatives to traditional testing. These could be used to determine a student's eligibility for a high school diploma.

Students would still have to show the same skills in English and math that the CAHSEE measures. School districts could create their own alternatives to the paper and pencil test. All students would still be required to take the exit exam.

I would appreciate hearing your thoughts on this important issue, as well as whether you support or oppose AB 1531 (Bass).

— *Rebecca Cohn*

Assemblymember.Cohn@assembly.ca.gov ♦

Planting Trees in the Park

SAN JOSE – As part of her ongoing environmental outreach efforts, Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn organized a tree planting at Rubino Park in San Jose. The event took place on Saturday, July 30th. Volunteers

provided all the necessary tools and equipment.

Assemblymember Cohn joined the program by adopting Rubino Park.

Neighbors have long wanted more shade in their park. The



Volunteers hard at work in Rubino Park

city of San Jose will plant several more trees near the picnic area in the park.

Assemblymember Cohn's planting adds to this project by a creating a backdrop of color. It also provides much needed shade across the picnic and entrance areas of the park.

This is the second

planted two trees, both Crate Myrtles donated by Summer Winds Nursery, at the park's north end. The new trees beautify the landscaping as well as create more shade for park-goers.

Many local residents volunteered their time on a hot Saturday morning to lend a hand in the planting. The City of San Jose's Adopt-a-Park Program

environmental event

Assemblymember Cohn organized this summer. The first was a cleanup of the Guadalupe River. Volunteers removed more than 700 lbs. of garbage from the river and its banks. The next event is a Creek Cleanup scheduled for October 15th. For more information, contact Cameron Day at (408) 282-8920 or Cameron.Day@asm.ca.gov. ♦

Program Teaches Teens Dangers of Dating

(Continued from page 1)

abuse and inform students where they can get help. The program is based on the Dating Abuse Teen Education presentation used by Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence.

The strength of the project lies in the collaboration between the 4-H group and local domestic violence agencies throughout Santa Clara County. The students know how to talk to their peers. The service agencies provide their expertise. The project has already

been implemented in four Santa Clara County high schools since its beginning. The next assembly is slated for October 7th at Saratoga High School. The curriculum for the assembly has been distributed throughout the State.

If you have any questions regarding "Stop the Silence of the Violence" or would like to request a copy of the curriculum, contact Julie Lind at (408) 282-8920 or Julie.Lind@asm.ca.gov.

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Internships in District Office

SAN JOSE – The district office of Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn is currently accepting applications for fall interns. Students in good standing from sophomores in high school to current college students may apply.

Interns will have the opportunity to work alongside district office staff members. Activities include researching legislation, helping constituents in dealing with state agencies and helping with special projects. Interns will also assist with written communications, including correspondence, reports and speeches.

Interested students can contact Tori Ueda in our District Office at (408) 282-8920, or by email at tori.ueda@asm.ca.gov. ♦

Cohn Brings Domestic Violence Hearing to District

CAMPBELL – As part of her ongoing efforts to examine domestic violence issues, Assemblymember Cohn will bring experts on the subject to the district for a legislative hearing. Cohn and the Assembly Select Committee on Domestic Violence will hold the hearing in Campbell. Cohn founded the committee her first year in the Assembly and serves as its chair.

The hearing will focus on new strategies to educate teens about

relationship violence. It will highlight a program that has been used in the Campbell Union High School District for the last year. The program combines information about domestic violence with what students already learn. For instance, teachers find examples of domestic violence in pieces of literature already being read in English classes. These examples serve as a gateway to educate their students about these issues in real life.

Hearing details:
Friday, September 23rd
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Campbell Community Center
Roosevelt Room
1 West Campbell Avenue
Campbell, CA
This hearing is free and open to the public.
Please contact Julie Lind at (408) 282-8920 or Julie.Lind@asm.ca.gov for more information. ♦

Fresh Food and Fresh Recipes

SAN JOSE – Did you know that asparagus can be fried in just minutes without oil? Or that strawberries get even sweeter when grilled?

These food facts come from the partnership between the Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association (PCFMA) and Kaiser Permanente San Jose. PCFMA brings its knowledge of fresh, California-grown produce while Kaiser brings its knowledge of health and nutrition. The result is "Cookin' the Market", a program of cooking demonstrations and tastings. The demonstrations show quick and easy ways to prepare fresh produce. PCFMA has been working with Kaiser Permanente for over two years, opening certified farmers' markets at nine Kaiser facilities around the Bay Area.

The *Cookin' the Market* program is centered at Kaiser Permanente Santa Teresa. PCFMA operates a certified farmers' market at the Santa Teresa Medical Center from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. every Friday year-round. Twice each month throughout the summer, the *Cookin' the Market* program offers demonstrations and tastings.

Cookin' the Market program teams up with Kaiser's community relations department to perform cooking demonstrations at health fairs and other community events. They presented at Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn's Health Faire last April.

For more information including additional recipes, nutritional information, and dates of upcoming demos, visit www.cookinthemarket.pcfma.com. ♦

Ideas for New Laws Come from You

SACRAMENTO – Most of Assemblymember Cohn's legislation comes from sources in her district. Many of the ideas for new laws come directly from constituents. If you have an idea for a bill, the legislative staff would like to hear from you. Email your ideas for legislation to Richard Woonacott at richard.woonacott@asm.ca.gov. Please include your contact information so that we can reach you if we have questions or need additional information. ♦



Students visit Cohn's capitol office. If your group or class would like to visit the capitol, please call (916) 319-2024.

First Storywalk Draws Young Readers

(Continued from page 1)

checked out books.

Assemblymember Cohn and the volunteer team from SBC delighted children with storytelling sessions throughout the day.

One of the highlights of the event was the "book swap". Children brought their old books and traded them for new and gently used books. Over 200 books were exchanged. The Learning Express donated

new books and local Albertson's Supermarkets hosted the used book drive.

The arts and crafts tables were hosted by "Creative Arts Learning Program". Art supplies were donated by Staples, Longs Drug Stores and Diddams party supplies.

Assemblymember Cohn sponsored the event to encourage children to read and to help promote literacy within the home environment. ♦

Broccoli-Garlic Sauté

Ingredients:

- 1 pound fresh broccoli
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup vegetable broth
- 1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper

Instructions:

- Remove broccoli leaves and tough ends of stalks. While the leaves and stem are not needed for this recipe, they are great for adding to soup stock or grated for adding to

salads.

- Cut broccoli into short spears.
- Preheat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and crushed red pepper to hot oil for one minute. Add broccoli and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes.
- Add broth and bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 3 minutes or until broccoli is crisp-tender. ♦